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REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS ANGOLA VERIFICATION MISSION (UNAVEM II)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 903 (1994) of 16 March 1994, paragraph 11 of which requested me to ensure that the Council is kept regularly informed on the progress of the Lusaka peace talks as well as on the military and humanitarian situation in Angola and, to this end, requested me to submit another report by 4 April 1994. Since the adoption of that resolution, the Council, during informal consultations, has been regularly informed of developments in Angola.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

2. It will be recalled that, by paragraph 2 of resolution 903 (1994), the Security Council called upon the Government and the União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (National Union for the Total Independence of Angola) (UNITA) to honour the commitments already made by them at the Lusaka peace talks and urged them to redouble their efforts with the aim of urgently completing work on the remaining items on the agenda, attaining an effective and sustainable cease-fire and concluding a peaceful settlement without procrastination.

3. Since my last report to the Security Council dated 9 March 1994 (S/1994/282), efforts have continued at all levels to make further progress at the Lusaka peace talks by getting the parties to conclude a comprehensive peace agreement and bring a just and lasting peace to the Angolan conflict, within the framework of the "Acordos de Paz" and of the relevant Security Council resolutions. The question of national reconciliation is the crucial issue that remains to be resolved.

4. As members of the Security Council are aware, the Government and UNITA reached agreement on the general principles of national reconciliation on 17 February 1994. Since then, the discussions have focused on the specific principles and the modalities of national reconciliation. Following

consultations on proposals presented by my Special Representative, Mr. Alioune Blondin Beye, the Government and UNITA have agreed on 12 of the 18 specific principles.

5. The 12 specific principles accepted by the Government and UNITA cover, inter alia, concepts such as tolerance, trust, coexistence, pardon and amnesty, as well as concrete questions, including the reaffirmation of the need for security guarantees, freedom of association, freedom of expression, the independence of the Judiciary, the adoption of the symbols of State, freedom of the press and decentralization. The points that have been agreed also cover the status of the UNITA Presidency and the protection of its senior leaders, as well as the participation of UNITA members in some State organs, such as public administration and public enterprises, and support to private sector initiative.

6. Since 3 March 1994, the discussions have centred on one of the six remaining points, namely the question of UNITA participation in the organs of central, provincial and local government and in diplomatic missions. The Government has offered to UNITA a number of posts at the level of ministers, deputy ministers, governors, heads of diplomatic missions and administrators of municipalities and communes. Following the negative reactions of UNITA to the Government's offer and faced with the difficulty of finding a compromise, my Special Representative travelled to Huambo on 12 March 1994 to meet with the President of UNITA, Mr. Jonas Savimbi.

7. My Special Representative's meeting with the UNITA leader provided him with the opportunity to update Mr. Savimbi on the progress of the Lusaka peace talks, including on the latest government proposals, which have the strong backing of my Special Representative and the three observer States. Following my Special Representative's presentation, Mr. Savimbi pledged to provide the necessary support to facilitate further progress in the negotiations. The President of Angola, Mr. José Eduardo dos Santos, who subsequently received my Special Representative in Luanda, also expressed support for his efforts and assured him of his continued cooperation.

8. Following the return of my Special Representative to Lusaka, the talks have continued to focus essentially on UNITA's participation in the management of State affairs, with the Government making proposals and UNITA making counter-proposals. The current focus is on the allocation of the posts of Governor and Vice-Governor of provinces. UNITA is insisting on administrative control in the provinces where it won the elections while the Government is concerned that this would lead to the de facto partition of Angola and violation of the unity and territorial integrity of the country. My Special Representative and the three observer States are pursuing their efforts to assist the Government and UNITA to reach agreement on this crucial issue.

9. The other outstanding points among the specific principles relating to national reconciliation concern the future status of "Vorgan" radio; the assumption by the UNITA deputies of their seats in the National Assembly; the re-establishment of State administration throughout Angola, and the return of UNITA property in the hands of the Government, and vice versa.

10. Once the outstanding issues on national reconciliation are resolved, the discussions will concentrate on the conclusion of the electoral process and on the future mandate of the United Nations and the role of the three observer States.

III. MILITARY SITUATION

11. Since my last report, the military situation throughout the country has been generally marked by a reduction of large-scale military operations. It appeared, however, that UNITA continued, sometimes with increased intensity, its raids, ambushes, shelling and other military actions, while the Government attempted to keep these actions in check and conducted limited offensive operations. The main thrust of the Government's military operations seems to have been directed at areas in the northeastern part of the country and the massing of troops and war matériel in and around the provincial capital of Saurimo.

12. Several reports, some of which have been confirmed by the Luanda team of United Nations observers, indicate that fighting also continued north of the provincial capital of Caxito and in the vicinity of Ukua (50 kilometres east of Caxito). Meanwhile, increased military movements, presumably reinforcement, redeployment and evacuation of casualties, have been reported elsewhere in the northern regions of the country. The situation around the cities besieged by UNITA is still tense, compounding the dire humanitarian situation of the population there. Recently, several cases of shelling of the city of Malange have resulted in the temporary suspension of humanitarian relief flights to this provincial capital. The military authorities of both the Government and UNITA have been issuing statements that indicate a resolve to prevent the advance of opposition troops on the ground, while at the same time accusing each other of preparing for major military offensives.

13. In anticipation of a successful conclusion of the Lusaka peace talks, the Secretariat, in close coordination with UNAVEM II, is proceeding with contingency planning to enable the United Nations to take the necessary steps to increase the strength of UNAVEM II as soon as a comprehensive settlement is reached, on the assumption that the Security Council would be ready to consider promptly a recommendation by the Secretary-General in this regard. In particular, UNAVEM II has formulated plans to deploy, immediately after a settlement is concluded, small teams of existing military and police observers to the provincial capitals of Huambo, Uige, Menongue, Luena and perhaps one or two other locations, in order to form the nucleus of new regional headquarters. In addition to increasing UNAVEM II's verification capabilities after the cease-fire, these arrangements would also serve as preparation for subsequent stages of deployment. In this connection, accommodation, transport, communications and other logistic requirements, as well as the necessary financial resources, would have to be provided in a timely and effective manner. These initial measures would have to be followed by a prompt increase in the authorized strength of UNAVEM II of up to 350 military observers, 126 police observers, 16 military medical personnel and an appropriate number of civilian staff, as indicated in my previous report to the Council.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

14. Since my last report, the United Nations system has pursued its humanitarian assistance programme throughout the country and, particularly since 16 March 1994, extended it to Kunje, located 7 kilometres north of Kuito/Bié. This location, which was totally isolated for over a year, contains some 25,000 persons.

15. The humanitarian situation in Angola demands greater attention from the international community and, following the official launching on 28 February 1994 of the revised United Nations inter-agency appeal for Angola, some donor countries have begun to respond positively.

16. In my previous report, I warned that World Food Programme (WFP) food stocks were being rapidly depleted. This is a crucial issue because of the large number of people dependent on external food aid. The food pipeline has now improved temporarily, thanks to swift action by donor countries, but it is necessary to obtain further pledges of assistance to cover the period after 15 May 1994. With the possible take-off of the demobilization, resettlement and reintegration programmes, demands will increase, and only urgent action by the donor community will enable these programmes to be effectively implemented.

17. Another priority sector that calls for the support of the international community is health. According to information provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), stocks of vital medicines, especially vaccines, at health centres and hospitals are very low. Once a peace agreement is concluded, more areas will be accessible and the health programme will be significantly expanded, putting further demands on supplies and personnel in this sector. Likewise, projects in nutrition, water, sanitation and emergency shelter require generous contributions to sustain the work of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in these sectors.

V. OBSERVATIONS

18. The peace talks between the Government and UNITA resumed in Lusaka on 15 November 1993 under the auspices of the United Nations. By 11 December, agreement had been reached on the general and specific principles as well as on the modalities relating to all military items on the agenda: the re-establishment of the cease-fire; the withdrawal, quartering and demilitarization of all UNITA military forces; the disarming of all civilians; and the completion of the formation of the Angolan Armed Forces, including demobilization. The discussions then moved to the political issues, namely the questions of the police and national reconciliation. By 31 January 1994, agreement had been reached on the general and specific principles and on the modalities concerning the police, including the composition of the rapid intervention police, which had required protracted negotiation.

19. Since 31 January 1994, the question of national reconciliation has been considered at the talks. The general principles on this question were agreed on 17 February and, since then, the discussions have focused on the specific principles and the modalities. Although agreement has been achieved on 12 of

the 18 points pertaining to the specific principles, 1 of the 6 remaining points, UNITA's participation in the management of State affairs, has caused the talks to stall for the past month, in spite of my personal contacts with heads of State, including President Mário Soares of Portugal, and my Special Representative's efforts.

20. I am convinced that the remaining issues relating to national reconciliation can be resolved if they are approached with realism and the necessary political will. I therefore urge the Government and UNITA to make every possible effort to show the flexibility needed to reach a comprehensive settlement at the Lusaka talks, so that the people of Angola can finally enjoy the lasting peace they deserve after so many years of conflict. It is equally imperative for the Government and UNITA to heed the Security Council's demands that they exercise restraint on the ground and cease all military actions. This would help to establish a much-needed atmosphere of trust and confidence at the Lusaka peace talks.

21. As regards humanitarian activities, the assistance programme remains on track, despite some isolated shelling incidents. Notwithstanding the military operations on the ground, United Nations agencies and NGOs have continued to distribute relief assistance to the affected populations throughout the country. I appeal to the Government and UNITA to give the necessary security guarantees and to refrain from any acts that would endanger relief workers or disrupt the distribution of humanitarian assistance to the Angolan people.

22. In paragraph 5 of resolution 903 (1994), the Security Council expressed its readiness to consider authorizing promptly an increase in the strength of UNAVEM II following a report from me indicating that the Government and UNITA had reached an agreement and that conditions for deployment were right. I continue to believe that it will be essential to strengthen the presence of the United Nations on the ground, as soon as a comprehensive peace agreement has been reached. I therefore trust that, following the necessary decision by the Security Council, the necessary financial resources will be made available in a timely manner, so as to consolidate the agreement in its initial and most critical stage and create the best possible conditions for its successful implementation.

23. I should like to take this opportunity to emphasize once more that recent experience with other operations has shown that it would take three to five months for the United Nations to deploy on the ground the fully operational and effective peace-keeping force that would be required. It would be important, therefore, that the Organization should be in a position to deploy military and police observers, at least in the regions where the situation is most critical, as soon as possible after a comprehensive peace agreement is concluded.

24. The personnel of UNAVEM II continue to display exemplary dedication in difficult circumstances. I pay special tribute to my Special Representative and the Chief Military Observer for the determination with which they continue to discharge their tasks.